

MAY 11 1961

ROCHESTER, N.Y.
DEMOCRAT & CHRONICLE

MORNING 126,055
SUNDAY 184,493

MAY 11 1961

Cloak for Blunders

Former Vice President Nixon has spoken out against the President's recent proposal for a self-imposed censorship of the press, thus adding to misgivings rising both inside and outside of the newspaper profession.

Nixon makes the point that a plea of security could become a cloak for the blunders of government officials. Some strange reasoning has occurred on the need to suppress news, all in the name of national security but actually to hide government actions from public scrutiny.

Another equally disturbing angle on the issue has been brought up—that of the government's giving misleading or false information to the people through the press. In the Cuban invasion fiasco the government apparently felt it could not trust the people to know the truth. While Cuban refugee leaders were imprisoned, the Central Intelligence Agency issued misleading data in their name. Government sources indicated that 5,000 men made the invasion, but the landing force was only around 1,000. Prior to the Kennedy administration, the State Department solemnly announced there was no effort to violate Soviet air space, this after the Russians had captured Francis Powers, high altitude reconnaissance pilot, over Soviet territory.

What is so often forgotten in the

dictatorship could not survive without a "controlled" press while a democracy would starve and expire without informed public opinion. A national administration cannot, in good grace, ask for a voluntary press censorship while deceiving its constituents on what is going on. President Kennedy was quoted this week as saying his administration intends to continue its "policy of free access to the news, that no form of restriction is contemplated or suggested." Nevertheless the President himself made the censorship proposal, it is an issue now and it will be an issue as long as freedom of the press remains a pillar of our republic. We cannot ignore any suggestion or effort to undermine it.

This editorial also appeared in
the following other newspaper :

NEWBURGH NEWS, N.Y. - MAY 13, 1961